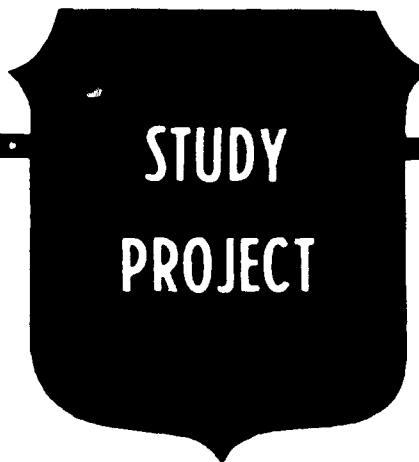


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PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION AND STRESS

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL MARY E. MORGAN  
United States Army

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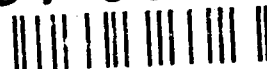
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PERMANENT CHANGE OF STATION AND STRESS (U)

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

Lieutenant Colonel Mary E. Morgan, AG  
United States Army

Lieutenant Colonel Paul T. Harig, MSC  
Project Adviser

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U.S. Army War College  
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

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## Abstract

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Relocation has received increasing attention from the Army Leadership since 1983. This interest has been in response to the Army's acknowledgment that both soldiers and families have an impact on readiness and retention and that the demographics of the Total Army Family has changed over a period of years. Permanent Change of Station is an inevitable aspect of military life and a source of many stressors for military members, spouses and children. This study explores how stressful Senior Army Officers and spouses feel certain aspects of a mobile lifestyle are for themselves their spouses and their children. In addition, the study explores how helpful they feel certain Army programs and services are in alleviating the stress associated with PCS moves. Finally, their coping methods and recommendations as to what the Army can do to assist them in lessening stressors are addressed. The study shows that despite the seniority and experience of the respondents PCS moves were stressful events for individuals and the family as a unit and although the Army has improved relocation support programs, they still need command emphasis, funding and improvement.

## INTRODUCTION

The Army has come a long way from the days when families were viewed as a hindrance to military efficiency and operations. A larger percentage of the all-volunteer force is married now than in the past, the composition of families has changed significantly, and the impact of support programs on family adaptation to military life has become an important issue at the highest levels in the Army and Department of Defense. Families are now recognized as a partner important to readiness and retention. The creation of the Army Community and Family Support Center exemplifies the Army's recognition of the families impact on readiness and retention and provides an organization to focus attention specifically on family issues.

The Army Family Research Program is a five-year integrated research program started in November '86 in response to a mandate by the 1983 Chief of Staff of the Army's "White Paper on The Army Family" and the subsequent Army Family Action Plans. The objectives of the research are to: (1) determine the demographic characteristics of Army families, (2) identify positive motivators and negative detractors to soldiers remaining in the Army, (3) develop pilot programs to improve family adaptation to Army life, and (4) increase operational readiness. The research is being conducted by the U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences (ARI). It is funded by Army

research and development funds. The Army proponent is the Army Community and Family Support Center (CFSC).<sup>1</sup>

### BACKGROUND

There are many unique demands placed upon families by the military as an organization but none has as many implications for the family unit as the demands of Permanent Change of Station moves, especially those made overseas. Although a mobile lifestyle can provide many growth opportunities to families, the positive aspects can be submarined by inherent and built-up stressors and hardships.<sup>2</sup> Eventually, significant stress and disruption within the family unit can lead to a deterioration of emotional and physical well-being, an increase in marital discord and a decline in satisfaction with the military as a way of life. The eventual impact of dysfunctional families on readiness cannot be discounted and the Army must continue to investigate the stressors associated with Permanent Change of Station moves.

Military families change residences four times more frequently than their civilian counterparts. The constant interruptions to spouses careers and education can cause tremendous stress in the family, have financial impacts and have an influence on the way families feel about Army life. For spouses of officers an overseas assignment can be particularly stressful and demanding. In this environment, intense competition between the Army and the family for the military

members' time and energy can have a detrimental impact on the spouses' adaptation to the new environment.<sup>3</sup> This competition for time can become significant, since past research has suggested that often officers' families are reluctant to turn to other families within the community for needed support. Their feeling that they must be "self-reliant" can be their response to frequent moves but also can result in personal and family isolation which leaves them susceptible to the ongoing stressors of military life.<sup>4</sup> Children, particularly those in high school, also feel the stresses of a mobile lifestyle and relocation does impact on their education, relationships within the family, and overall stability.

How families adapt to the military sub-culture is especially important when considering the demands placed on them by mission and readiness requirements.<sup>5</sup> There is tremendous pressure placed on the family to subordinate its needs to support the military members' career aspirations and to meet the demands of the Army as an organization. How other family members respond to being absorbed by the Army can make them either allies or adversaries in the competition for the allegiance, loyalty, and commitment of the military member. The Army constitutes an unusual and sensitive interacting puzzle of individuals, families, military units, and communities that must be mutually supporting if the system as a whole is to carry out its mission.<sup>6</sup> The disruption of frequent and often short-notice moves is one part of military life that can drive a wedge between

the organization and families and ultimately have a negative impact on readiness and retention.

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to reveal how stressful senior Army officers and their spouses felt frequent permanent change of station (PCS) moves were for themselves, their spouses and their children. The study was not geared specifically at the health implications of relocation stress but rather at how strongly respondents felt stressors were and whether they felt certain events associated with PCS were stressful at all. In addition, by surveying both military members and their spouses it was possible to contrast their views on the significance of various relocation events and the magnitude of perceived stress associated to them.

Another aspect of the study was to determine the respondents' view of benefits of selected Installation Programs and Services which were created to alleviate the stressors associated with relocation. For this study, a Permanent Change of Station, heretofore shown as a PCS or Relocation, began when the military member received notification of a move to a new location.



## RELOCATION STRESS

The term stress has become commonplace among the Army to describe pressures that individuals feel in response to a variety of circumstances both inside and outside the workplace. The term "stress" was first introduced into medical discussion in 1926 by Hans Selye.<sup>7</sup> He originally applied the term to mean "the rate of wear and tear in the body," but its usage has expanded to encompass the nonspecific response of the body to any demand.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, these demands (stressors) produce residual effects which are seen in increased vulnerability to disease as well as specific disease end-points.

Current research associates stress to increase risk for heart disease, ulcers, cancer, stroke, hypertension and in many psychological disorders. Yet, stress is a normal condition of life and its stimulation is needed for our systems to properly function. Extreme demands over and above the normal stress levels cause problems. When stress exceeds an individual's ability to cope, it becomes a negative factor resulting in impairment or physical and psychological complaints. Up to a point, "stress" means biological stimulation (Eustress) that promotes growth. Going beyond that point results in destructive overload (Distress).

## SOURCES OF STRESS

Almost any situation that a person is exposed to can become a source of distress. As previously stated, those events can be positive or negative stressors, depending on circumstances and on individuals response to them. There are several potential sources of distress that are inherent in military life that can be magnified when associated with PCS moves.

Emotional: worry, isolation, apprehension, loneliness

Family: responses to internal family issues

Change: change to the physical environment

Employment: changing jobs and constantly searching for a  
new one

Education: constant disruptions to schooling

Financial: coping with constant financial shortages

All of these sources of stress except emotional can be considered external, but the internal responses to them could be the most damaging to the military family and be the stimulus for the activation of the adaptation syndrome. The focus of this paper deals with a source of stress that can have tremendous impact not only on families but Army readiness and retention as well. Specifically, that event which occurs with ever-increasing frequency, Permanent Change of Station (PCS).

The moment PCS orders are received things begin to happen within the family structure that can make the move an extremely stressful event or one that can be taken in stride as a part of

the mobile military lifestyle. PCS is an emotional event and there are four primary factors that can produce emotional stress:<sup>9</sup> Threat to one's self-esteem which may occur when a spouse must leave his or her job to PCS; frustration due to the blocking of attainment of a desired goal such as completing an advanced degree or children finally making the band or educational club; conflict when one is faced with a decision making dilemma such as whether or not to pull children out of their senior year of high school or leave them with friends or relatives; and a change from the familiar to the unknown such as a PCS to a foreign country. Contributing factors such as poor communication, lack of timely information and the interactions between families and the military community responsible for providing support can be multipliers that compound an already stressful event. The families' reaction to the total sequence of events will determine how stressful the move actually will be.

Studies of the effects of mobility in the civilian sector reveal a correlation with heart disease in men. Research revealed that men of 35-45 years and older who were occupationally mobile had four times greater incidents of heart disease than a stable group regardless of factors of heredity, obesity, smoking and physical activity.<sup>10</sup> Also studies have shown that men who experience life events characterized by change, complexity and new environmental demands are more susceptible to coronary heart disease than men who experience few such events.<sup>11</sup> This research has implications for senior

military officers because of the mobile lifestyle but also an added factor is the significant number of Type A personalities found with this War College class. The combination of the two warrants the attention of the Army's policy makers and medical community.

For spouses of military members constant PCS moves may mean a disruption of their total environment to include career/job, relatives, friends, home, education and social place in the community. This total disruption to a "normal" lifestyle may foster feelings of self-doubt, loneliness and depression.<sup>12</sup>

Research has shown that most children do not like to move and for those in their teenage years moving may be especially traumatic. A child's identity is centered around an attachment to people and places, both of which change frequently with constant relocations. Changing schools, loss of peer relationships and loss of contact with grandparents can be very disruptive to a child or children.<sup>13</sup> An Army spouse says it all this way:

We have experienced a high degree of family stress during teen years of our children. By then, they (and we) have exhausted all our previous coping skills. Anger and frustration could not be channeled into positive outlets as had worked in elementary school.

Since everyone reacts differently to stress the potential for disruption to the family as a unit is considerable. Children will most likely have an optimistic attitude about life in general, be less concerned about health issues, and still be young enough that worrying about a career is not a major issue. They will, however, lack experience in how to cope with change and be susceptible to drug and alcohol abuse. For military members and spouses involved in this study, concern about mid-life are in the forefront. We have frequently been exposed to the term "mid-life crisis" which implies a time of professional and personal change or turbulence, emotional upheaval and the stress of dealing with spouse and children's concerns. We associate this time with increased alcohol consumption, depression, emotional distress, changing partners and discontent with a long-term spouse.<sup>14</sup> Pile the stressors of ever more frequent relocations into this already traumatic scenario, the family is headed for crisis. As military members we may not be able to eliminate stressful events, particularly those associated with relocation but we must be able to manage that stress.<sup>15</sup>

#### MANAGING THE CHALLENGE OF STRESS

We're emotionally and physically drained from  
making and leaving friends, schools and jobs.  
(Army Spouse)

As the stressors of dealing with constant moves pile up over the years, individuals and families develop coping mechanisms for managing hardships, attacking requirements and

responding to crisis situations. Although we espouse our own personal coping style and it seems to work for us it may not be the best way of handling stressful events.

Research by two psychologists, Drs. Scott and Jaffee, has revealed that people who handle stress effectively have three common active coping styles. Conversely, those who have trouble handling stress tend to have difficult coping styles.<sup>16</sup> Most people will find they have used part of each style but the way to success in handling stress is to work on adding more active coping to ones repertoire of skills. The three coping styles used by those who handle stress well are:

- Support Seeking. When stressors begin to build feelings are shared with other people or support services are called upon to help resolve issues. Family, friends or counselors are called upon to provide information and support.
- Diversion/Tension Release. A decision is made that certain things are not worth getting upset over since they cannot be changed. Engaging in physical activity promotes total wellness.
- Direct Action. Keeping a problem in perspective and not being overwhelmed by a situation at hand. Under current circumstances you do the best you can and stress is kept at a manageable level. A positive attitude is substituted for a negative one.<sup>17</sup>

Difficult Coping Styles exhibited by those who have difficulty handling stress are:

- Withdrawal, Helplessness and Internalizing. Planning ahead is difficult, major tasks are avoided, problem solving becomes overwhelming and feelings are kept inside.

- Emotional Outbursts. Blaming other people, irritability, anger and loss of control are ways of handling stressful events. Blowing up and letting off steam is viewed as a good way of alleviating pressure and stress.

- Overcontrolling. Planning for every possible scenario, everything is critical and must be done now and do everything oneself. Type-A behavior patterns are prevalent and anger is the response to stressful situations.<sup>18</sup>

There is no simple blueprint for PCS stress management since assignments differ, support services vary from post to post and sponsorship works well in some areas and not in others.<sup>19</sup> There are, however, many proven techniques which can help military families decrease the stressful events associated with relocation. The problem is that many people believe they should be able to "tough-it-out" on their own. This is particularly true of senior officers but unless we have all learned and developed proper skills for dealing with stress our distress will continue and eventually take its toll on the individual, the family and the readiness of the Army as an organization. The implications for the Army are that programs need to be done prior to a crisis and need to include the entire family.

### THE CHANGING ARMY FAMILY

#### Increased Stressors For Today's Army

Many years have passed since the time when families were viewed by the Army as "Camp Followers" and marriage was discouraged by Army Regulation. However, the process of assessing the impact of family issues must continue as the Army

reduces in size and deals with significant cuts in resources. In recent years the Army leadership has recognized the families impact on readiness and retention and studies clearly indicated the need for family oriented support programs.

The all-volunteer Army brought with it a more quality soldier but also one with different views, family structure and expectations than had been seen in the past. Many volunteers have not perceived the military as a "calling" or profession but rather a job or a means to accumulate benefits for further civilian schooling. As college tuition became more unaffordable for many, the monetary incentives offered by the Army became more attractive to parents as well as to students. By the mid-1980s the Army family had become internally more complex and reflected a very different structure than in the past. This change can be attributed to:

- More sole-parent families headed by men: 24,984 in 1989.
- More Army spouses in paid employment:  
Between 1979 and 1985, their labor force participation rose from 47.5 percent of spouses to 56 percent. Spouses have careers of their own and are less willing to subjugate themselves to the typical role of the "Army wife." Since the spouse is providing a considerable amount to the family income, disruption to spouses' careers also impacts on the families' financial well-being.<sup>20</sup>
- More "dual-Army" families: Of the 5,738 officer marriages to other service members, 5,634 are to Army personnel. Of the 30,907 enlisted marriages to other service members, 30,806 are to Army personnel.<sup>21</sup>



- More female soldiers: Today women make up 11.4 percent of the Army<sup>22</sup>, up from 7 percent in 1979 and 10 percent in 1985.<sup>23</sup>
- More women as sole-parents: 9,677 in 1989.
- More family members accompanying personnel stationed abroad: Between 1979 and 1985, the percentage of all Army children living abroad rose from 27 to 32.
- Changing Roles within the family: The military man, like his civilian counterparts, is playing a more active parenting role and is not as willing to put up with separation and relocations that occur frequently.<sup>24</sup>

These trends alone do not present overwhelming concerns but when in a combination they can have serious implications for the military as an organization, particularly as it becomes more mobile in the future. For example, by 1985, approximately 1 of every 11 accompanying Army children was in a family where one or both parents could be called away for a prolonged period in the event of conflict. This represents more than 42,000 children who were accompanying either two parents both on active duty or an unmarried custodial parent on active duty.<sup>25</sup>

#### A SNAPSHOT OF THE ARMY FAMILY

Active Duty Officers	106,255	
Enlisted	<u>639,712</u>	
	745,967	(Excludes USMA Cadets)

<u>WHERE STATIONED:</u>	
CONUS	483,443
OCNUS	262,534

<u>WOMEN IN UNIFORM</u>	
Officers	12,134
Enlisted	74,335

AGE		
	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>
20 & younger	36	136,586
22-25	15,577	223,004
26-30	25,501	131,130
31-35	23,866	85,971
36-40	19,952	51,322
41-45	14,330	18,724
46-50	5,334	4,183
+ 50	3,227	1,267

<u>FAMILIES</u>				
	<u>Spouses</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Parents/others</u>	<u>Total</u>
Officers	79,186	116,072	1,714	196,972
Enlisted	320,063	481,345	3,878	805,286

(Source: Defense Manpower Data Center)

Today, over half (74% officers and 50% enlisted) of the Army active duty force is married, significantly more than was the case 20 years ago when less than 40 percent were.<sup>26</sup> This increase in marriages was greatest in the enlisted ranks and since the inception of the all-volunteer force the number of dependents compared to numbers of married soldiers has remained a very stable factor. With over a million very mobile dependents currently in the Army family (1,002,258) the demand for quality support programs is going to be high.

Data compiled by RAND for the Army shows that most spouses of enlisted men have been married to their husbands for less than 10 years while most officers' spouses have been married to their husbands for at least or more than 10 years. Most families with children have one or two and nearly half of these children are

under age six. Army men marry earlier than their civilian counterparts of comparable age. More Army women under age twenty-five are married than their civilian counterparts but above age twenty-five fewer are married than civilians. This pattern has remained consistent even though civilians have been steadily marrying at later ages.<sup>27</sup> Over 5,700 officers and almost 31,000 enlisted members are married to other military personnel.<sup>28</sup> Over 70 percent of both officer and enlisted members who are married have children. According to the RAND report Army personnel not only marry earlier than their civilian counterparts but beyond the mid-twenties have larger families. In addition, the majority of married Army women above their mid-twenties are mothers but, at every age, married Army women with children is less than the comparable percentage of married Army men. The fact that Army families get established earlier than those in the civilian community has implications for the Army managers when dealing with PCS policies. In addition, the stresses Army families will face in our mobile society are not going to lessen even as we move towards a smaller force.

#### SPOUSE EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

##### Employment Definitions:

When discussing the area of spouse employment, the standard definitions used by the Bureau of Labor Statistics provides a common ground from which to begin. Those who have jobs or are actively seeking employment are the primary categories of persons

in the labor force. Persons who are self-employed are also considered in this category. Those who are not employed but are actively seeking employment are considered unemployed. Those who do not have a paid job and are not looking for employment are defined as not in the labor force. This category also includes those "discouraged workers," who are not looking for work because they believe there are no jobs available for them. Many of the spouses in overseas areas fall into this category of "discouraged workers." Among those employed, 35 hours a week or more is considered full-time; those who work fewer hours are employed part-time.<sup>29</sup>

Through WWII Army policy discouraged marriages among its ranks and even denied married men reenlistment and access to housing. Despite the policy, wives made important contributions to the war effort as paid and unpaid members of the workforce. The employment of family members can actually be traced as far back as the Revolutionary War when wives provided an array of services such as cooking and nursing.<sup>30</sup> They endured many hardships as "camp followers" to be close to their husbands and because of the lack of housing resorted to living in chicken coops, tents, cellars and abandoned shelters.

According to a 1989 RAND report, for each more recent generation of civilian women, a progressively higher fraction has joined the work force. Considering women now in their thirties, nearly two-thirds participate in the labor force and more than

one-half of them were working when they were 20-24 years old. Among the women who are currently in their twenties two-thirds are working. The older generations, according to the report, are being replaced by women who join the labor force earlier in their lives and these are the job-seeking Army spouses of the future.<sup>31</sup>

Currently, Army wives tend to be young; approximately 77 percent are less than 34 years of age. They are also somewhat better educated than the general population with 90 percent having completed high school and 43 percent having obtained some training beyond high school. Almost 40 percent of the spouses have some prior experience with the military.<sup>32</sup> There are significant differences between officer and enlisted spouses that influence their entry into the labor force and their likelihood of finding employment. Officers' wives tend to be older (48 percent are over 35 years of age) compared to 18 percent for enlisted, have at least a bachelors degree (46% vs 8%), tend to be married longer (54% vs 27%) married at least 10 years and less likely to have children aged 5 years and younger (39% vs 53%) than enlisted wives.<sup>33</sup> Past research has shown that contrary to what one might expect, husbands income does not statistically influence the likelihood of working part- or full-time but the length of time at location does significantly affect the level of employment. The longer a spouse is at a given location the more likely she is to change from part- to full-time employment.<sup>34</sup>

Spouses who have struggled to obtain degrees and who are considered highly educated are constantly faced with the frustrations of not only finding a job but one that adequately uses their talents and skills and pays commensurate with their education and experience. Too often, to keep from being unemployed, they accept positions where they are underemployed. This phenomenon of constantly searching, accepting less and getting paid fewer dollars builds internal stress that can impact on self-image, negative feelings towards military life, less support for continuing a career and family upheaval.<sup>35</sup> Studies have shown that spouses who are unemployed but who want to work are significantly less likely to be satisfied with military life and less supportive of their spouse remaining in the Army.<sup>36</sup>

Tradition that has held that spouses subordinate their career/educational desires and development to that of the military member is quickly changing. Consideration of spouses' careers is becoming a more important military career decision-making factor and these changes have important implications for the Army of the future. Spouses in increasing numbers are indicating in DOD surveys and interviews that their husbands' military job does in fact interfere with their own employment desires. The ramifications for both junior and senior officers are there; spouses with good careers of their own will be less supportive of officers remaining in the Army after reaching retirement eligibility and in the case of junior officers make the military a career. Since women are entering the work force

at an earlier age they will have made career decisions by the time they marry military members.

I believe the Army needs to give more attention to working wives. With the cost of college or any type of advanced education, the extra income makes a difference. Wives should have priority over locals in OS areas and in some professions like teachers--too many good ones aren't teaching because they are married to a military man.

(Senior Army officer)

Stress associated with PCS moves will continue to rise within the Army structure as the older generation leaves and is followed by more self-career oriented younger women. The Army needs to be seriously looking at the changing population and its potential for impact on future readiness.

There are some stress indicators that the Army leadership needs to take into account:

- During a time when increasing number of Army spouses are seeking employment, particularly overseas, Federal Civil Service jobs are limited in total number.
- Although spouse preference and priority placement programs can help some PCSing spouses to continue Federal employment, there is competition for available jobs from local civilians, military retirees and many position incumbents are local residents. Therefore, jobs may not turn over and be available at the new installation.
- Data on length of time to find a job indicates it takes spouses considerably longer to get a Federal job than one with another civilian employer, which can impose costs, in terms both of lost income and opportunities to develop seniority and experience on the job.
- Future and current budget cuts will mean a reduction in Federal employment opportunities for spouses at a time when more will be seeking employment.<sup>37</sup>

...(the) consequences of women's employment (e.g., for mental health, marital satisfaction, children's well-being) are favorable when women's employment status is consistent with their (and their husbands') preferences about it.<sup>38</sup>

Family member employment assistance programs need to be reviewed and continually updated as the Army demographics, the national economy and Army PCS policies change. Better coordination is needed at the local level not only between on-post agencies providing employment services but between government agencies and the local community.

#### AN ARMY ON THE MOVE

Results from the 1985 Department of Defense Survey of Officer and Enlisted personnel revealed that Army families have the greatest mobility of all military personnel.

I am bitter about a system that says one thing, but does another. I am bitter about senior leadership that says one thing but does not demonstrate with actions that they care about families. I'm bitter about being lied to by branch chiefs (GOs) and assignment officers whose interest is putting pegs in holes without regard for impact on my family. The only reason I'm still in is because of finances, and the Army is responsible for that. I guess I feel trapped.  
(Senior Army Officer)

One of the underlying characteristics of the profession of Arms is its mobile lifestyle. The Army is an organization constantly on the move and each year thousands of military members pack up and move to a new location either in the States



or Overseas. We have become so accustomed to moving that frequently overlooked is the tremendous impact relocation can have on readiness and retention. Effective management, productivity and quality of life for soldiers and families are issues that are directly related to PCS policies.<sup>39</sup> For soldiers leaving the service, one of the major reasons they give for separating is the constant PCS moves and the disruption it causes within the family structure.<sup>40</sup>

Civilian families also move periodically over the years but military relocation differs in numerous ways from those of our civilian counterparts. Army families normally move every 3 or 4 years and frequently more often. Military reassignments impact on all grade levels throughout the structure while moves in the civilian community are most frequently made by mid and senior level executives.<sup>41</sup> The differences between civilian and military moves are subtle but important.

- Military families have less choice. While service members are under "orders" to move, civilians can usually turn down a transfer without jeopardizing employment. This "pressure" to move when it is not in the best interest of the family can trigger a very stressful environment for all concerned.
- Civilian moves are usually associated with promotions. Military relocations are not necessarily viewed as "moving up."
- Of the 20 percent of the civilian population that moves each year, only 6 percent are beyond county lines. Most military moves are across state or national boundaries.

- Military families in general are young and inexperienced. Civilian transfers tend to be in the mid or top level executives.
- Military moves incur more out-of-pocket expenses than corporate moves; and military families seldom have the resources to meet expenses. Military families are reimbursed only 3 dollars for every 10 they spend out of pocket.
- There is a certainty of frequent moves for the military, more so than among civilians who have a better opportunity to stabilize in one area. Stress is created for military families by the uncertainty of when and to where the moves will occur.
- Mission requirements for military members result in more frequent and longer separations than in the civilian sector, which in turn has an impact on the relocation cycle.
- Tours of duty in the military are remote or isolated and in foreign countries far more often than for civilians whose relocations are usually to metropolitan areas in the U.S.<sup>42</sup>

In looking at relocation the physical event of moving is only one part of the total picture and cannot be viewed in isolation when exploring the stress associated with it. The move from one location to another is only a part of the mobility picture that encompasses a continuous cycle of adjustments and transitions. There are several phases within the total spectrum of mobility:

- THE PRE-DEPARTURE PHASE: usually is one of frantic activity accompanied by positive and negative feelings of anticipation and apprehension. It is a time when accurate information is critical. Research has demonstrated that the better an individual is prepared before a move, the more rapid and successful will be the adjustment.

- THE TRANSITION PHASE: is a short, energy-intensive period that includes the actual departure, travel, and arrival at the new installation. It is a time of disconnect from the old and enthusiasm about the new location.
- THE ARRIVAL AND ORIENTATION PHASE: is a time when the need for information is great. It is in this phase that the family in transition has a better frame-of-reference for the information that is provided. Future attitudes are developed, based on the communities' welcome and helpfulness. Outreach can be very effective during this phase.
- THE RECONNECT PHASE: occurs between two and six months after arrival and at first may be marked by bewilderment and disillusionment. These negative reactions usually disappear as newcomers become acquainted with the community and make new "connections." How well and how quickly families get re-established can have a direct bearing on them in terms of dollars and cents. Also, the quicker the adjustment, the more productive the soldier is likely to be on the job.
- THE STABILIZATION PHASE: lasts from about six months after arrival until about six months before the anticipated next move. Even though this is the most productive phase for those who have successfully adjusted, a mid-term slump is not unusual. Even in this phase, the knowledge that another relocation is inevitable often detracts from a families' willingness to develop strong friendships or bond with the community.
- THE RE-ENTRY PHASE: usually is seen when families return from overseas assignments to the U.S. Since the majority of military moves involves OCONUS assignments, the re-entry phase is critical. The need to assist those enroute to an overseas assignment is easily recognized, but returning "home" also can be a real jolt. It is easy to overlook potential problems related to returning to the U.S.<sup>43</sup>

The need for family support programs is magnified by the roles relocation plays in the total Army structure. Every aspect of family life is affected by constantly moving from one location

to another. The separations that frequently occur during PCS moves are a great source of stress, particularly for spouses.<sup>44</sup> Since military members frequently leave for a new duty station before spouses and family members the burden for most of the move falls upon the spouse. Lack of support from the departed soldiers' friends, family or work unit may make the situation even more stressful. Taking on additional responsibilities at a time when assistance is already needed may overburden or possibly isolate the spouse. Military spouses often report that their social position becomes extremely awkward when the military member has moved ahead of the family.<sup>45</sup> Spouses remaining in the old location after the military member has been transferred find they are no longer part of their previous "couples" social set. The hail and farewell parties, unit functions and post clearing have taken place and spouses have usually reduced participation in community activities in anticipation of the move. The military members replacement has arrived and activities are geared around welcoming and sponsoring the new spouse versus continuing involvement with the departing spouse. The outgoing spouse is no longer invited to social activities, most likely employment has been terminated and an isolation from friends and support groups at a time when they are needed the most occurs. A similar scenario occurs when the spouse is sent ahead of the military member to find a new home and get the family settled. The sponsorship and welcome systems have not yet been activated, no unit support is available since it is focused on the incoming military member and the spouse is left to cope

with an unfamiliar new environment. The implication for Army leadership, particularly installation commanders, is that programs need to offer a full range of support that includes the different phases of the PCS process.

When developing future Army policies, family issues must be given a high priority and reflect the needs of the current military family. Previous assumptions would better suit the current Army climate if stated:

- The health and stability of service members and their families are vital to the accomplishment of the primary military mission of national defense.
- The implementation of military policies and the realization of desired goals are greatly facilitated if family needs and the projected impact of specific policies on families become integral parts of the decision-making process.
- To attain and maintain a high level of personnel effectiveness, military policies regarding the recruitment, health, performance, and retention of service members must reflect a positive emphasis on the supportive role of the family.
- Policies regarding pay scales, allowances, and benefits must take into account the financial and psychosocial hardships of military life and their impact on family members.
- Military-sponsored medical, financial, and social service programs and benefits must be considered guaranteed rights of the service member's family in partial compensation for the stresses inherent in military life.
- To the greatest possible extent, family considerations should be incorporated into personnel policies regarding duty assignment, relocation, separation, and career planning.

- Family problems are not outside the domain of military policy; coordinated services within the military system and effective linkages to civilian resources must be mobilized to offer appropriate preventive and treatment programs for family problems.
- Family members have the right and responsibility to challenge, seek clarification of, and attempt to change policies that they feel undermine family stability.
- Systematic investigations of the functioning, problems, and needs of the military family are the responsibility of policy-makers; knowledge derived from such studies is an essential component of policy-making and policy-review processes.<sup>46</sup>

#### EVOLUTION OF SERVICES

A good sponsorship program pays great dividends. The military bureaucracy tries to offer info and support in a variety of ways, but normally is much too superficial and inadequate.

(Army spouse)

Prior to our entry into WWII the Army dealt with families requiring emergency support informally using "post" funds or asking for charity from local organizations or the Red Cross. As the Army grew in numbers these local agencies could not handle the needs of soldiers and their families. In 1942 the Secretary of War directed the organization of Army Emergency Relief (AER) to administer funds to relieve distress.<sup>47</sup> "The Army Takes Care of Its Own" was adopted as the AER slogan. As the Army continued to expand, services and benefits were evolving in a piecemeal fashion and in 1952 the Wickenden Study pointed out the lack of basic social services available to soldiers and

families.<sup>48</sup> The "Take Care of Our Own" slogan was not in reality happening. In 1965 the establishment of Army Community Service was the Army's first real attempt to establish an umbrella organization for family services. By regulation, AR 608-1, the Relocation Assistance Program, is the responsibility of ACS.<sup>49</sup>

The most significant thrust forward for support of families took place in 1980 and was led by a group of Army wives. They organized the first Army Family Symposium which has grown to an annual event supported by the senior leadership of the Army.

In 1983, the Army Chief of Staff, in his White Paper outlined the philosophies and goals of the Army toward the family: to insure adequate support to families in order to promote wellness; to develop a sense of community; and to strengthen the mutually reinforcing bonds between the Army and its families.<sup>50</sup>

In the paper he makes reference to the needs of families experiencing stress and the need to find ways for healthy families to transfer their skills, experiences and attitudes in promoting family wellness. The underlying philosophy of the White Paper was based on the realistic position that a better environment would attract (recruiting) inspire (readiness) and retain (retention) the best talent our nation had to offer.<sup>51</sup>

To emphasize the importance of families to the Army, 1984 was declared the "Year of the Army Family." Also in 1984 the

Army Family Action Plan (AFAP) was instituted as the management tool to outline issues affecting Army families and specific initiatives the Army planned to implement/work for the benefit of families.<sup>52</sup> In the latter part of 1984 the U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center was established to consolidate under one roof most of the quality of life programs for the Army Family. One key responsibility of the CFSC is to oversee the Army Family Action Plan. One of the strengths of the Plan is that it begins at the Installation and Community level where family forums can make their needs known. This is the families opportunity to tell the Senior Army leadership about the stressors of PCS moves and what the Army as an institution can do to help. It also provides a barometer to local leaders on how their programs are or are not meeting the needs of the total family.

#### RELOCATION ASSISTANCE AND THE SPONSOR PROGRAM

Relocation assistance was the number one Family Action Plan issue for 1989. So important is the relocation issue that Congress enacted legislation in 1989 that called for the establishment of a standardized relocation program throughout DOD.<sup>53</sup> The legislation required the Secretary of each military service department to provide relocation assistance which included:



(a) Area information provided before the PCS move with emphasis on moving costs, housing costs and availability, child care, spouse employment opportunities, cultural adaptation and community orientation.

(b) Counselling about financial management, home buying/selling/renting, stress management, property management and shipment and storage of household goods (including motor vehicles and pets).

(c) Settling-in services to include spouse employment assistance information.

(d) Home finding services to include adequate affordable temporary and permanent housing.<sup>54</sup>

The 1990-91 Defense Authorization Act enacted into law the requirement for Military Relocation Assistance Programs. From September 1987 through September 1988, Army, as executive agent for DOD, developed and tested a model relocation assistance program.<sup>55</sup> Outcomes were positive and encouraging from the test but the method selected of contracted implementation was beyond budget capabilities.<sup>56</sup> By regulation AR 608-1, ACS has the responsibility to administer the relocation program, a significant challenge in an environment of reduced funds and the ACS's reliance on volunteers. The quality of local programs varies depending on command emphasis and support given to the Army's guidance and initiatives. The Army relocation assistance program initiatives for 1990 were:

- Emphasis on pre-move counselling provided by trained relocation experts.
- Deploy the Relocation Automated Information System (RAIS) which will make gaining community information readily available at the losing installation ACS office.

- Implement expanded overseas orientations.
- Provide professional training for ACS relocation assistance program staff.
- Market through all appropriate media sources field initiatives and successes in relocation assistance.<sup>57</sup>

The ACS Center can provide very needed relocation services to soldiers and families but is only one aspect of the assistance issue. Another key and vital element in providing help and alleviating the stressors of PCS is the Army Sponsorship Program. Since the "Unit" has traditionally been the focus for soldiers arriving at a new location, the way the sponsorship program is administered is critical to a successful move, especially to and from overseas locations.

The sponsorship program is great. But, many times it is the people who could use the program most who fall through the crack and have no sponsor. (Spouse)

Welcome letters which are cold and obligatory do more to discourage than a short informal note from someone who really cares. (Officer)

There is a difference between sponsorship and relocation assistance and all involved need to have an understanding of what each should provide. They are, however, closely linked and both must be fully implemented if either is to be effective.<sup>58</sup>

Sponsorship from the unit provides the essential "Human Touch" while ACS relocation provides the professional expertise soldiers and families need to prepare for their move. Sponsorship success depends less on whether letters are exchanged prior to arrival than on the quality of assistance offered after arrival.<sup>59</sup>

Duty roster, the next soldier available type program will not be effective without proper training of those who will serve as sponsors. Sponsorship is often viewed as "unfixable" because of systemic problem in linking families to sponsors but this need not be the case at all. Keeping in mind that relocation assistance connects people with services and that sponsorship connects them with other people there should be no difficulty in every unit having a quality program.<sup>60</sup>

Relocation will continue to be a stressful event for soldiers and families despite the best efforts being made by the Army, communities and units. Learning to cope with the expected and unexpected stressors is the key to a successful move. A quality sponsorship program can go a long way towards complementing positive coping skills that have been learned from proactive, meaningful programs. The partnership between community, unit and the soldier can solve an "unfixable" problem.

## SURVEY OF ARMY OFFICERS AND SPOUSES

### PURPOSE OF SURVEYS

The purpose of the surveys was to quantify the views of Army officers and spouses of the Army War College Class of 1991 regarding a range of Permanent Change of Station issues. The survey included both fact-finding and opinion questions centered

around the stressors associated with relocation and Army programs available to assist soldiers and families.

Method:

One hundred ninety-seven soldier and 158 spouse surveys were distributed and the respondents were given one week to complete them. Of the total distributed, 75 percent of the officer and 66 percent of the spouse surveys were returned. A follow-up to determine why the remaining surveys were not returned was not attempted. When the statistics were tabulated, portions of percentages were rounded off. Quotes used in this paper shown as (spouse or officer) were taken from comments respondents made throughout the surveys.

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS:

All military respondents were Army officers, 19 Colonels and 117 Lieutenant Colonels. Regular Army officers made up 90 percent of the population with the remaining 10 percent consisting of Reserve or National Guard officers. Seventy-five percent have between 20-23 years of service and have PCSd an average of twelve times; but 40 percent have moved 13 times or more. The majority are in their first marriage (76 percent); with 17 percent having been married for the second or subsequent time. Four percent of the respondents are divorced and the remaining 3 percent are single. Of those who are married, the average number of years was 17 but 49 percent have been married between 20-24 years. Sixty-six percent of the respondents' last

PCS was from an OCONUS location while the remaining 34 percent arrived at the War College from CONUS assignments. Forty-six percent of the respondents were scheduled for a PCS when their children were in the critical high school years.

All spouse respondents were women, none of whom are members of the Armed Forces. Eighty-six percent of the spouses are in their first marriages and 51 percent have been married for more than 20 years. All are high school graduates and 90 percent have some schooling beyond that level. Twenty-two percent have bachelors level degrees and 12 percent have degrees at the Masters level. Another 19 percent have graduate credits beyond the bachelors level but have not yet completed an advanced degree. A total of 17 percent of the spouses were raised in military families. Sixty percent are not employed and are not looking for a job; 15 percent are not employed but want to be and are searching for a job. Only 8 percent of those who are employed are doing so full-time. There are 208 children in the families, the largest percentage of whom are in the 12-16 year-old age range.

## RESULTS

### STRESS IN THE FAMILY UNIT:

We're emotionally and physically drained from making and leaving friends, schools and jobs.  
(Spouse)

When asked the question, "In your family, for whom is a PCS move the most stressful?" both military members (55%) and spouses (45%) agreed that a move is most stressful for the nonmilitary spouse, followed by children and lastly the military member. Since 73 percent of military members strongly agreed/agreed that a mother's attitude toward a PCS move impacts on the families adjustment to relocation, the fact they feel the most stress is significant. In addition, 67 percent of the spouses strongly agreed/agreed that frequent moves are a negative part of military life and 74 percent strongly agreed/agreed they would like their military spouse to retire because of the frequency of PCS moves.

A high percentage of married respondents strongly agreed/agreed that relocation is the cause of stress between them and that confrontations with each other increase at PCS time. One Army officer stated the problem in these words: "Stress to the point of violence." Of the officers who were divorced or remarried, 48 percent strongly agreed/agreed that frequent PCS moves were a contributing factor in the breakup of their previous marriage. "The Army can do very little when a family is at odds over most things due to poor communication"; "As moves continue, I feel more and more compelled to ask my wife to take on duties- there is a very subtle strain placed on a marriage as these moves quicken and also pile one on top of another." From these statements, the frustrations of both military members and spouses are clearly evident and are supported by their answers to the following questions.

When asked if competition for the military members' time was an added PCS stressor, 66 percent of the spouses either strongly agreed or agreed and 78 percent of their husbands strongly agreed/agreed that their current job interfered with their helping with moving requirements; on the arriving end of the move, 77 percent of the spouses strongly agreed/agreed they received little help from their husbands in getting settled and 70 percent of the military members agreed their new job interfered with helping their spouse. When responding to questions about personal feelings, spouses said just prior to a move they felt excited, followed by apprehensive and displaced. After a move, the most frequently cited feelings were confident, but isolated and lonely in that order. Respondents remarked that a reasonable settling-in policy should be espoused and practiced by the Army leadership, since forcing families to fend for themselves only increases the stress already being felt by all concerned.

There should be built-in Admin Leave for PCS moves to re-establish foundations at new duty stations without interference from gaining command. Particularly important for key personnel since they get busy immediately on reporting for duty.  
(Officer)

One of the most difficult aspects of relocation for the military family is severing relationships that have been the basis of their informal support network while stationed at an installation. The survey did point out a difference between military members and spouses when dealing with the subject of their relationships with friends. Leaving friends because of

relocation was stated to be a very stressful event for 31 percent of spouses but only 6 percent of military members mirrored this response. For military members, the job/social environment often consists of the same people and leaving professional relationships are easier to accept than close personal relationships. On the other end of the stress spectrum, 16 percent of spouses versus 33 percent of military members felt there was no stress involved in leaving friend. However, making new friends was very stressful for only 9 percent of spouses and 38 percent indicated it was not a stressful event at all. These statistics may indicate that leaving the social support group established is very stressful for spouses but on the other hand re-establishing the network after a move does not pose any significant problem.

#### CHILDREN ON THE MOVE:

Kids take the brunt of a PCS move. Our daughter moved in her senior year. She found courses and activities not open to her because they were picked at the end of the previous year. (Officer)

Although a greater percentage of spouses felt frequent relocations were a negative part of military life, 85 percent strongly agreed/agreed that overall they are positive experiences for children. For both parents, getting a child settled in a new school was fairly evenly divided between being very stressful, moderately and somewhat stressful. Among mothers, the greater percentage found this event to be moderately stressful as opposed to fathers who found it to be only somewhat stressful. Although not a significant gap, the difference between how mothers vs



fathers responded could be attributed to the greater percentage of stay-at-home mothers in this group. Also since the vast majority of mothers who worked did so only part-time, they would more likely be home when children arrived from school and they would be the focal point for a child's concerns about school. This scenario can also be related to the difference in response received to the survey question that addressed dealing with children's emotional concerns at PCS time. Thirty-two percent of the mothers vs 14 percent of the fathers indicated this was a stressful event for them. Almost twice as many fathers vs mothers found this concern not stressful.

When asked how stressful adjusting to a new school was for their children, 50 percent of the fathers felt it was very stressful while 42 percent of mothers thought so. In addition, 38 percent of fathers and 41 percent of mothers viewed adjusting to a new school to be moderately stressful for their children as opposed to a small percentage who viewed it as somewhat or not stressful. Comments from both parents revealed the stress level rises as children enter their junior and senior years of high school.

Although the greater percentage of both parents viewed adjusting to a new school as very to moderately stressful for their children, only 29 percent and 30 percent, respectively, felt that the actual interruption to the child's school curriculum was a very stressful event. Both parents felt the

child's concern about participation in extracurricular activities was more stressful than curriculum issues and fitting into a new peer group was the most stressful event of all. These statistics are supported by other research that has shown that relocation significantly impacts on the child's social environment which is what they relate most to as they develop. A very important component of this social environment for children are their friends and the constant moves of military life keep the process of making and nurturing friendships in turmoil. Leaving friends is recognized by both parents, 88 percent of mothers and 90 percent of fathers as being a significant stressor for their children.

Children's relationships within the family unit are also affected by relocation. Fifty percent of mothers and 60 percent of fathers responded that PCS moves are a cause of stress between them and their children. Over half of the mothers strongly agreed that children's behavioral problems increased shortly before a PCS, but over half of the fathers strongly disagreed/disagreed that this is the case. The same percentage of fathers, however, did strongly agree/agree that behavioral problems increased shortly after a PCS move was completed. Mothers also equally agreed that problems are evident after a move and almost 40 percent strongly supported this contention. Despite the increased behavioral problems, only 8 percent of the mothers and 11 percent of father said they lost time from work/duty because children had problems adjusting to the move. However, over half

of the mothers said they did take time from work to get their children settled in.

As children grow older, moving has more of an impact on them and has the potential to be a significant stressor, particularly in their junior/senior years of high school. Teenagers are very emotionally tied to their peer group and associate their self-image with their social/educational environment. Peer groups revolve around school activities and constant disruptions to their ability to "bond" with a stable environment can be problematic as the frequency of moves occur.

The one move we made when our children were in high school was the most stressful...all we could do as parents was not enough to lift them over the depression of leaving their friends and security. They suffered and we did too. We could not protect them. It was reflected in school, in relationships in changed behaviors (withdrawal, anger, denial, depression, gaining weight, etc.). In twenty years it was the only hard move.  
(Spouse)

Of the parents who responded to the survey, both mothers and fathers were in agreement that relocation is the most stressful when their children were juniors and seniors in high school. The stressors for children as individuals and as members of a family unit need to be recognized and addressed. Their impact on soldier readiness and retention cannot be overlooked and clearly there is a need for stress prevention programs rather than responding to after-the-fact crisis within the family. Children must be included in the getting settled-in activities that so often just include the soldier. A solid recommendation

for the Army was stated by a spouse who made the following comment.

As children get older more stability is needed in their lives; therefore I think the Army should try to meet the needs of the family more. Less moves when children are in high school. (Spouse)

#### SPOUSES OF MILITARY MEN:

The military's view of the wife as supporter, entertainer and community volunteer must change. Today's wife needs and wants more than pouring teas and serving on committees! She needs to be her own person. (Spouse)

Both soldiers and their spouses who responded to the survey agreed that PCS moves are the most stressful in the family for the spouse of the military member. Spouses' careers, education and employment are all affected by the constant moving and instability of military life. As previously stated, almost three-fourths of the women said they would like their military spouse to retire rather than continue the frequent PCS moves. This high percentage should be of no surprise to the Army Leadership. After years of lost professional opportunities, financial shortfalls, emotional trauma of severing friendships, damaged household goods, substandard housing, cultural isolation OCONUS, short notice, etc., etc., enough is enough. The wear and tear begins to show and support for continuing in the military steadily erodes.

Too often, spouses are left with the major burdens of PCS moves because the military member is required to be at the work

place. Military members need to be given adequate time before and after a move to provide needed support as a part of the family unit.

I don't think there is anything that can eliminate the stress. It would be nice to have your husband around at moving time.

(Army spouse)

### Spouse Employment

Although the greater percentage of the surveyed spouses were not currently employed, 70 percent of those who were or wanted to be indicated disruptions to their careers were very/moderately stressful. Only 48 percent of the husbands felt this event was stressful for themselves, but 75 percent recognized that some degree of stress was felt by their wives over career interruptions. Seventy-five percent of the spouses strongly agreed/agreed that frequent PCS moves interfered with their pursuit of a full-time career and that they were prevented from advancing upward in their chosen field. Fifty-two percent strongly agreed/agreed that employers were reluctant to hire them because they were the spouse of a military member.

The Family Member Employment Program is not working. When I called...I was told employment would be very difficult. That really added to my stress. (Spouse)

My wife is a school teacher and must get certified in each new state we move to as well as apply in several school districts. What this means is it is usually about a year or until the next school year starts before my wife finds a job. (Officer)

Searching for new employment can be a frustrating and stressful experience, particularly if moving to a high cost area

where the additional income is needed immediately. Ninety-two percent of the spouses said that searching for new employment was stressful with 44 percent stating that it was very stressful for them. In addition, 63 percent of the spouses stated they feel frustration and stress because they cannot make career plans as their husbands can. Studies have shown that women are entering the labor force at an earlier age than women did of this age group. The Army of the next century is going to deal with this dilemma and the time to be preparing for it is now.

#### EDUCATION AND THE MOBILE LIFESTYLE:

I have transferred to seven universities for undergraduate work. Lost enough credits to have earned a masters degree at out-of-state rates.

(Army spouse)

The frustrations spouses felt in trying to fulfill their desires to pursue educational goals were clearly evident in the surveyed group; 67 percent strongly agreed/agreed that frequent moves discouraged them from working on an advanced degree and 70 percent said frequent moves interfered with their finally being able to fulfill requirements for the award of a degree. Since employment opportunities are often linked to education level the ramification for not only initial employment but advancement opportunities becomes a stressor for those trying to get established or get ahead. Also the financial implications of constantly trying to keep ahead of lost credits at out-of-state rates are significant and add to the financial strain of moving so frequently. Sixty-two percent of spouses responded that the

constant disruptions to their education was moderately or very stressful for them. When asked how stressful the interruption to their spouses education was for themselves, military members responses were almost evenly divided between very, moderately and somewhat stressful but with the majority (37%) stating it was moderately stressful. Nineteen percent of the military members versus 17 percent of their spouses responded it was not a stressful event. Lack of educational opportunities as with employment can over the years become one of the "pile-on" stressors that increases the potential for problems in the family unit. Many of the spouses stated that they had just "given up" trying to earn or complete a degree and wasting money on lost credits was not in the best interest of the family. This was particularly true of those whose children were nearing college age. They felt it was better to forego their own education and use the money to educate their children.

#### FAMILY FINANCES:

The most stressful thing about PCSing is the monetary cost - about \$2,000 per move during my career and the destruction of your furniture and property which you are never adequately compensated for. (Army officer)

Financial shortfalls are a fact of life for mobile military members and the effects can pile on quickly as the moves become more frequent. Eighty percent of spouses and 74 percent of military members who responded to this part of the survey indicated that there was a degree of stress for themselves

because of the financial loss associated with frequent moves. Forty percent of the spouses said the financial loss was a very stressful factor for themselves. If financial concerns have an impact on families at this senior a level the implications for families whose income is considerably less are significant. The families who can least afford the financial strain are often required to pay out the most, particularly in initial "set-up" costs. This is an area where the "pile-on" stressors need to be identified in the preventive mode versus having to do crisis intervention when families are in trouble. Out-of-pocket expenses are even more of a burden for those required to reside off post. The whole area of PCS costs needs research and action from the Army Leadership. Reimbursements aren't offsetting the costs and, especially for junior families, the financial stress can lead to a multitude of problems. The dollars spent treating the symptoms could be better spent fixing the problem.

#### ARMY PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The knowledge is nothing. The assistance is what matters. The Army hasn't the inclination nor resources to accomplish this mission. The institution that is the problem can't fix it.  
(Army officer)

When asked to respond to the statement "the stress of frequent PCS moves is lessened if installations have good support programs" only 18 percent of the spouses strongly agreed/agreed while 82 percent either strongly disagreed/disagreed. Conversely, of military respondents, 77 percent strongly agreed/



agreed while only 23 percent strongly disagreed/disagreed. The difference in response for this group could be because senior spouses tend not to utilize installation support services while senior military members are involved because they are responsible for junior families who are the big users.

Although both military members and spouses indicated throughout the survey that financial loss was a significant stressor for them, less than half agreed that financial classes on preparing for PCS would help alleviate the stress associated with it. Remarks from both groups provided some insight into their responses. Most of the respondents are veterans of many moves and know that financial planning cannot offset the shortfalls in authorized Army reimbursements allotted for PCS expenses. The frustrations of dealing with financial concerns for which there are no solutions within their control raises stress levels and sitting in a class to discuss them would only be another stressor. Even for those who may benefit from such a class, senior people would not want to give anyone the impression they could not resolve their own financial challenges. The negative implications of using support programs still exists, particularly for Senior officers and their families. In addition, the respondents represent a higher income bracket than would more junior families and the senior people can more readily absorb the financial burden of frequent moves.

Relocation Assistance Programs, Installation and Local Community Orientations all were viewed as important stress reducers. Relocation assistance at the new installation was viewed as more important than that received at the departing location. Eighty-four percent of the spouses strongly agreed/agreed that new installation assistance was a stress reliever versus 69 percent who felt some services were beneficial at the departing station. For military members, 76 percent favored services at the new duty station vs only 47 percent supported the importance of services at the losing installation. Over 90 percent of the spouses gave strong support for local community orientations as helping to reduce stress and over 80 percent of both spouses and military members felt an installation orientation for the whole family was beneficial. In addition, 98 percent of spouses and over 80 percent of military members strongly agreed/agreed that having a Directory of Installation Services and Programs was helpful.

What can the Army do to lessen the stress of PCS moves? Continue and encourage the sponsorship program. Having a POC to ask questions of really helps because they can give you more specifics. Welcome packets by the Installation are somewhat helpful but often too broad. (Spouse)

The sponsorship program, often one of the weakest links and possibly the most important key to successful family adaptation needs the attention of leaders at all levels but particularly in the units. Since most families identify closely with the soldiers' unit versus an unknown entity at the installation level, good sponsorship programs are critical. Over 90 percent

of spouses and over 80 percent of military members strongly agreed/agreed that sponsorship assistance helps in reduction of stress and also over 90 percent of the spouses and almost 80 percent of soldiers strongly supported the need for youth sponsorship programs as well. Youth employment information and recreation programs were also viewed as important in helping to reduce stress for children, particularly those in high school. The Sponsorship Program can be fixed but more command involvement from DA to MACOM to unit is required. The emphasis must shift from having "one" to how it must actually work. This would be a productive MSP topic for a future student and the fixes are too lengthy to be fully discussed in this paper.

Programs in support of spouses were listed on the survey as career planning, employment referral and education assistance. Of these, the spouses who strongly agreed/agreed they were important ranked employment referral first, followed closely by education assistance and career planning last. Although career planning was listed third among this group, over 70 percent strongly agreed/agreed that it was important. A great deal of money has been poured into these programs but as with the Sponsor Program greater emphasis is needed on how well they are working.

Families and single soldiers required to reside off post are at a distinct disadvantage from their peers who are given government quarters both financially and in the availability to services. This category of the Army family for the most part are

"on their own" and often isolated from the rest of the military community. Both spouses (93%) and military members (85%) strongly agreed/agreed that services for families living off post would help to alleviate some of the stress associated with relocation to the civilian community.

The results of the survey clearly indicate that installation programs and services are important in helping to reduce stressors associated with a mobile lifestyle. There are also coping skills used by families to deal with the relocation experience. The answers to the question of what works for you in alleviating stress for yourself and your family were as varied as the respondents themselves. Open communication was by far the most frequent response and encompassed several sub-areas; talking with family and friends, recognizing the reasons for stress and talking them out, admitting the feeling of stress, expressing feelings and listening, maintaining an open relationship that shares personal fears and explaining the move to the children. Early planning, organization and gathering of information are the next most frequently mentioned, followed by physical activity, preparing emotionally and physically, maintaining a positive attitude and good sense of humor and doing fun things with the family.

The Army has increasingly recognized the value of formal stress management programs but until recently they have been geared to support military members. The results of the survey

clearly supported the theory that PCS moves are most stressful for the non-military spouse and more stressful for the children than the military member. Sixty-eight percent of the spouses strongly agreed/agreed that a formal stress management program for the entire family would be helpful in coping with the stress of frequent PCS moves.

#### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Soldiers and families are certain of one thing, that is an inherent part of their military lifestyle - moving! The unknowns are when and where, and of particular concern is where; CONUS or OCONUS. PCSing or relocation as it is more commonly becoming known as, can be a positive experience for both military members and the family but all too often it signals a string of stressful events that have the potential to disrupt the family unit and eventually impact of readiness and retention. The early '80s signalled a significant upswing in the amount of time, energy and resources the Army was devoting to family issues and programs. The increased emphasis was based on the philosophy that the Army and its total family are a partnership and that a better environment for both soldiers and families would attract and retain a quality, productive force.

The Army has been very successful in achieving its goal of a quality force but the challenge of the '90s is to retain that force in an environment of reduced numbers and resources. Many

studies and surveys have been done to determine how the Army family views its place in a large and complicated organization where "mission" is the function that drives the train. There is still research to be done but also that which has been done needs to be heeded by the policy makers and the Army Family Action Plan used as a proactive tool to continue to improve the Army for all of its members.

### CONCLUSIONS

- Relocation is a stressful event for soldiers and families regardless of rank. The move itself can be viewed as a positive event but the "piling on" of stressors associated with the move cause disruptions to the soldier and the family unit.

- Relocation is viewed by the majority of respondents as most stressful for the spouse, children and military member in that order.

- Family member satisfaction with the Army as an organization does impact on retention and combat readiness.

- Family relationships and cohesion are influenced by the stress associated with PCS moves.

- There is great dissatisfaction with the frequency of moves and it increases as children enter their high school years.

- The financial loss associated with frequent moves is a great concern even for senior people whose income can better support the cost of a move versus more junior people.

- The challenging role of the military spouse will continue to impact on the Army of the future. The stress associated with frequent disruptions to their career and educational opportunities is a factor in their support for a military member remaining in the Army.

- Children are affected by frequent PCS moves and more so in a negative manner as they enter their high school years.

- There is agreement among both military members and spouses that good Army programs and services are valuable in alleviating the stressors associated with frequent moves.

- The sponsorship program at the unit level is a critical element in the program process and needs more attention from the Senior Army leadership.

- The ACS must become more proactive in the future and take the lead in marketing the programs available to soldiers and families. ACS Directors must spend more time with unit level leadership to formulate programs and to educate officers and NCOs who are responsible for soldiers and families what programs are available. Preventive vs crisis intervention programs need the emphasis.

- More stability is needed in the force which will significantly reduce PCS "pile on" stressors and promote increased retention and readiness.

- Housing is a significant concern for all Army members and needs a thorough research effort followed by action.

- More research is needed on how successful families cope with stress and the implications for the rest of the Army.

- Sufficient time is needed both prior to and after a PCS move to attend to relocation issues. Military members are normally expected to be at work during this critical period and spouses are left to deal with additional stressors.

- The Family Member Employment Program needs a changing emphasis. Better coordination between ACS, CPO and the local community is required.

- Resourcing for the Army's family programs will not be sufficient and the Army leadership must look for new and innovative ways to maintain quality programs.

- The Army Family Action Plan is an excellent management tool to keep the Army focused on family concerns and needs. It has been a very effective method of institutionalizing programs and procedures and has resolved a wide range of concerns and initiatives. In addition, the AFAP has given spouses an opportunity to be heard and has positively impacted on their views of Army life. Care must be taken to monitor the number of new issues placed in the plan. Reduced resources signal the need for prioritizing issues and working those to completion.

- Research sponsored by the Army Community and Family Support Center must continue and emphasis needs to be focused on prioritizing and evaluating family programs.

- Unit level support programs need a formal Army directive to govern them. They are critical to positive family adaptation and need to be formalized. The Army sponsorship program can be fixed. Inspections need to evaluate how the program is run; too



often inspectors look only to see if there is one. Command emphasis is the key.

- The Army's annual surveys of spouses and military members need to continue. They provide a good forum for input directly from those who are the recipients of Army policy and programs. Results need to be analyzed more quickly and be provided to the Army's Senior Leadership for action. Results also need to be provided to all Army schools to be included in the curriculum. Leaders need to know what their soldiers and families are saying.

- Reduced resources mean there will be a need for innovative thinkers to maximize the funds available.

- Installation commanders must fully involve both on and off-post families and soldiers. They are a valuable source of information and ideas. When people are involved in the decision making, better programs are the end result.

- Stress management is now a part of the ACS relocation assistance package but it is again at the installation level. The program needs to be at a lower level where participation is fostered by unit leadership and the program is proactive versus reactive in nature. ACS personnel can be used as experts to help formulate and conduct programs but until programs are at the unit level too much time will be spent dealing with soldiers and families in crisis versus being in the preventive maintenance mode.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

There needs to be continued emphasis by the Army's Leadership at all levels on family issues and quality of life concerns for all soldiers and families. Significant progress has indeed been made towards the goal of establishing a partnership between the Army and its members. However, the '90s should be a time of improving the management of existing programs and providing more effective training to those responsible for implementing and overseeing programs. The following recommendations are made and include input from the military members and spouses who took the survey.

- Fewer PCS moves. Smaller, more home-based Army. Stabilize families with children in high school.

- Selection Boards convened so results are out in time for planning moves, e.g., Colonel Command Boards published earlier so short notice for War College graduates can be kept to a minimum.

- Better quality control and oversight of household goods.
- PCS reimbursement more commensurate with actual expenses.
- Claims settled at replacement cost. Damage is not the fault of service members and they should not pay for others' negligence.

- Fourteen-day settling-in period. The Army expects soldiers to report immediately to work and this places tremendous stress on the family already trying to deal with changing environment. Leave should not be used to get settled.

- Better personnel management at Department of the Army level. Too many short-notice moves and moves for the sake of moving.

- Off-post residents should not have to pay out-of-pocket living expenses. On-post personnel pay nothing; more equality for off-post residents a must.

- Leaders need to stop discouraging homesteading. It has its advantages both for the Army and for families. It should be viewed as a positive management tool, not vice versa.

- More Professional Sponsorship Program. Training for sponsors should be mandatory. Not everyone should be a sponsor. Sponsorship programs must include the entire family not just the soldier.

- ACS must become more proactive rather than reactive. Better coordination with units, on-post activities and local community. More paid staff vs volunteers is needed. Better marketing of programs is necessary. Director of Programs should be in the units regularly with leadership and providing training programs for sponsors.

- Army schools must include programs and services in all NCO and officer courses. The leadership of the Army must be knowledgeable of programs offered, the effects of stress in the family and its impact on readiness.

- Officer and NCO calls at the installation level must address support services and programs available to them.

- Better coordination between CPO and ACS on the family Member Employment Program. Since a majority of spouses do not

get government positions better referral for civilian community jobs is necessary.

- Better networking between spouses. Often the spouses who need services the most are isolated from those with the experience.

- One stop In and Out processing centers. Still too many in name only. Needs to be for the entire family.

- Day Care Center vouchers for families inprocessing/outprocessing and on the day the movers arrive.

- Give military spouses who work for Civil Service one year leave of absence without pay as is done for the civilian workforce.

- Fund the movement of two cars vs one. With more spouse employment off-post and other support requirements, a two-car family is the norm, not the exception.

- Pets are an integral part of American life and should be moved as part of the household. It is well researched that pets can be a stress reducer and should be recognized as such during the stressful time of moving. Separating families from pets is not the thing to do.

- Housing is a major area of concern. The Army must get a handle on housing issues. Do the research and take action.

- Weight allowances should be eliminated. People forego hobbies because equipment is heavy; quality furniture is heavy; and if the Army wants to retain families then move families in total. Cost could be offset by fewer moves.

- Mandatory training classes for post personnel involved in customer service activities. Often stress is elevated by unknowledgeable or uncaring support personnel.

- If a college-age student selects a school in the state where parents are currently stationed, that student should retain those in-state rights when parents are PCS'd.

- High school graduation requirements should not negatively impact on military dependents. Transferring of course credits towards graduation should be allowed.

- Military spouses and military members should not be penalized while working on graduate degrees. As long as a person remains within a chosen discipline credits should be transferrable.

- Increase family participation in the community decision-making process. Having a say in community decisions gives people a sense of control over their surroundings and also provides opportunities for developing both formal and informal support networks.

- The Army leadership at all levels needs to reevaluate the organizational culture and policies of the Army and the impact on families. The negative social stigma, particularly for officers, using programs needs to be changed.

- As we move into the '90s there needs to be more emphasis on prevention of stressors vs reaction services. Too much time is spent on dealing with families already in a crisis situation. Time spent on reducing pile-on stressors through proactive services and programs will be required in an environment of fiscal

constraints. Trying to provide rehabilitative services with a limited staff, often ill-prepared and trained will not provide families what they need.

- As funds diminish, the tendency in support services is to rely on volunteers. Often spouses have provided the pool for this volunteerism and that may not be the case in the future. More spouses are working now and many more will work in the future and the volunteer resource will not be available. If programs are to work they must be adequately funded. Senior Army leadership must remain committed to providing funds necessary to support Army families.

- Automation of the relocation support system must continue. Getting timely, accurate information is critical to making a smooth transition from one location to another.

- More research needs to be done by Department of the Army on stress and the family. They need to look at how successful families are coping with the stressors of relocation and what strategies they are using to adapt.

- Studies need to be done with the medical community to determine causes of general medical/stress related complaints. Investigating the link between complaints and a recent relocation could provide valuable insight into the effects of PCS moves. Are these the families who are not coping and how do they differ from those who successfully make the relocation transition?

This research, particularly the survey, supports the fact that relocation has within it significant stressful events. If this level of stress exists among senior, experienced families

who have knowledge of and access to many programs and services what must the stress level be for the majority of the Army who is young, inexperienced and without the support network of those more senior in age and years of service? As resources continue to decline, time and energy needs to be spent on productive programs and services. Doing more with less will require each of us to be innovative thinkers who utilize all potential resources to the maximum. Greater prevention of crisis vs intervention is the key to successful programs and services of the future.

APPENDIX A



## Soldier Survey

- 
- A. Please circle the letter of the appropriate response or fill in the blank.
- B. For the purposes of this Survey a PCS begins when you are notified of a move to a new installation.
- 

1. What is your current rank?

- A. LTC
- B. COL

2. How many years of Military Service have you completed?

- A. 17-20
- B. 20-23
- C. More than 23

3. Are you?

- A. RA
- B. USAR
- C. ARNG

4. What is your current marital status?

- A. First marriage
- B. Second or subsequent marriage
- C. Legally separated or filing for divorce
- D. Single, never married
- E. Divorced
- F. Widowed

5. How long have you been married to your current spouse? \_\_\_\_

6. Is your spouse currently on Active Duty in the US Armed Forces?

- A. NA, I am not married
- B. Yes
- C. No

7. Are you and your Army spouse on a Joint Domicile?

- A. NA, my spouse is not in the Army
- B. Yes
- C. No, we did not request it.
- D. No, but we did request it.

8. Is your spouse currently employed for pay?
- A. NA, spouse on Active Duty
  - B. Yes, full-time (35 hrs or more per week)
  - C. Yes, part-time (less than 35 hrs per week)
  - D. No, would like to, but can't find a job
  - E. No, does not want to work now.
9. Is your spouse living here with you?
- A. Yes
  - B. No
10. Are you a single parent?
- A. Yes
  - B. No
11. How many dependent children do you have?
- A. None
  - B. One
  - C. Two
  - D. Three
  - E. Four
  - F. Five or more
12. How many of your dependent children live with you full-time?
- A. None
  - B. One
  - C. Two
  - D. Three
  - E. Four
  - F. Five or more
13. How many times have you PCS'd during your career? \_\_\_\_\_.
14. How many PCS moves were unaccompanied? \_\_\_\_\_.
15. When on your last unaccompanied PCS where did your family reside?
- A. Remained in current quarters
  - B. Moved to a different location

16. Which of the following describes how you handled a scheduled PCS move when your child(ren) were in high school? (Grades 9-12)

- A. NA
- B. Moved entire family to new duty station
- C. Left the family at the current duty station
- D. Left only the High School child(ren) at the current duty station with friends or other family members.
- E. Requested an unaccompanied tour
- F. Other

17. Have you ever been scheduled for a PCS move when one or more of your children were in their sophomore, junior or senior year of High School?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. NA

18. As a result of your last PCS move did you or your spouse take time from duty/work because your child(ren) had problems adjusting to the move?

- A. NA, no children involved in the move
- B. No, no time lost
- C. Yes \_\_\_\_\_ hours or \_\_\_\_\_ days.

19. In your family, for whom is a PCS move most stressful?  
\_\_\_\_\_

20. In your family, how stressful is a PCS move for each of the following members? (Circle one response per member)

- 1. Very stressful
- 2. Moderately
- 3. Slightly
- 4. Not stressful
- 5. NA

a. Yourself	1	2	3	4	5
b. Your spouse	1	2	3	4	5
c. Pre-school children	1	2	3	4	5
d. Middle/intermediate school children	1	2	3	4	5
e. High school students:					
sophomores	1	2	3	4	5
juniors	1	2	3	4	5
seniors	1	2	3	4	5
f. College students	1	2	3	4	5
g. Elderly parents and relatives living with you	1	2	3	4	5

21. Children's behavioral problems in my family increase shortly before a PCS move.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

22. Children's behavioral problems in my family increase shortly after a PCS move.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

23. PCS moves have been the cause of stress between me and my spouse.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

24. Frequent PCS moves were a contributing factor in the breakup of my marriage (if divorced or separated).

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

25. Confrontations between me and my spouse increase during PCS time.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

26. When family needs conflict with Army needs the family should come first.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree

27. PCS moves have been the cause of confrontations between me and my child(ren).

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

28. Dealing with the financial concerns of frequent PCS moves is a stressor for me.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

29. Frequent PCS moves have interfered with my ability to complete an Advance degree.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

30. An OCONUS move is more stressful than a CONUS move.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree

31. Frequent PCS moves are more stressful for me when my child(ren) is/are in High School.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

32. How stressful were the following for you when associated with the PCS move before the one to the War College?

1. Very stressful
2. Moderately
3. Slightly
4. Not stressful
5. NA

a. Loss of friends	1	2	3	4	5
b. Financial loss	1	2	3	4	5
c. Disruption to child(ren)'s education	1	2	3	4	5
d. Disruption to spouses career/job	1	2	3	4	5
e. Disruption to your spouse's education	1	2	3	4	5
f. Dealing with child(ren)'s emotional concerns	1	2	3	4	5
g. Getting settled in a new job	1	2	3	4	5
h. Getting child(ren) settled in a new school system	1	2	3	4	5
i. Dealing with spouse's personal concerns	1	2	3	4	5
j. Selling/renting previous home	1	2	3	4	5
k. Making new friends	1	2	3	4	5
l. Leaving a pet behind	1	2	3	4	5
m. Leaving parents or other relatives	1	2	3	4	5
n. Physical move (packing, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
o. Disruption to your education	1	2	3	4	5

33. The stress of frequent moves is lessened if installations have good family support programs.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

34. My spouse's feelings towards frequent moves has a great impact on how the family adjusts.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

35. Knowing every installation had a Family Relocation Assistance Office would lessen the stress associated with frequent PCS moves.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree

36. Generally, after a PCS move my new job interferes with helping my spouse get the family settled.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

37. Generally, prior to a PCS move my current job responsibilities interfere with helping my spouse with the moving requirements.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. NA

38. The following installation programs would help me and my family to alleviate the stress associated with the moving process.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Disagree
4. Strongly disagree
5. NA

a. Financial classes on preparing for PCS	1	2	3	4	5
b. Spouse Employment Referrals	1	2	3	4	5
c. Spouse Career Planning	1	2	3	4	5
d. Relocation Assistance	1	2	3	4	5
e. Installation Orientation	1	2	3	4	5
f. Sponsorship Assistance	1	2	3	4	5
g. Relocation Counselling (Departing and Installation)	1	2	3	4	5
h. A Directory of Installation Services & Programs	1	2	3	4	5
i. Services for Families Living Off Post	1	2	3	4	5
j. Youth Employment Program	1	2	3	4	5
k. Youth Sponsorship Program	1	2	3	4	5
l. Youth Recreation Programs	1	2	3	4	5

39. How stressful do you think the following are for your child(ren) when associated with a PCS move?

1. Very stressful
2. Moderately
3. Slightly
4. Not stressful
5. NA

a. Leaving friends	1	2	3	4	5
b. Adjusting to a new school	1	2	3	4	5
c. Fitting into a new peer group	1	2	3	4	5
d. Concern about extracurricular activities	1	2	3	4	5
e. Interruption in their school curriculum	1	2	3	4	5



40. Suggestions/recommendations (Please do not be constrained by budget, etc. Your ideas on programs, etc. will be helpful in providing DA information on what needs to be done.). Use additional sheets if necessary for your recommendations.

## Spouse Survey

- A. Please circle the letter/number of the appropriate answer or fill in the blank.
- B. For purposes of this Survey a PCS BEGINS when you find out your spouse has been notified of a move to a new installation.

1. What is your marital status?

- A. First marriage
- B. Second or subsequent marriage

2. How long have you been married to your current spouse?  
\_\_\_\_\_ yrs.

3. How many times have you PCS'd since being married to your current spouse? \_\_\_\_\_ PCS's.

4. Were you raised in a career military family?

- A. Yes
- B. No

5. Have YOU ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces - either on active duty, in the Reserves, or in the National Guard?

- A. Yes
- B. No

6. What is the highest level of education you have achieved?

- A. Less than high school
- B. High school diploma
- C. Business/technical school degree
- D. Up to 2 yrs of College but no degree
- E. Associate's Degree
- F. 3 to 4 years of College but no degree
- G. Bachelor's Degree
- H. Some graduate credits
- I. Master's Degree
- J. Doctorate (Ph.D., J.D., ED.D.)

7. Are you interested/have you been interested in continuing your schooling?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Not sure

8. Are you currently employed for pay?

- A. Employed full time (35 or more hrs per week)
- B. Employed part-time (less than 35 hrs per week)
- C. Not employed, but looking for work
- D. Not employed and NOT looking for work

9. How many children do you have in the following age categories?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ 22 years or older
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ 18 to 21 years
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ 15 to 17 years
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ 12 to 16 years
- e. \_\_\_\_\_ 9 to 11 years
- f. \_\_\_\_\_ 6 to 8 years
- g. \_\_\_\_\_ 3 to 5 years
- h. \_\_\_\_\_ Less than 3 years

10. How many of your children live with you full-time?

- a. None
- b. One
- c. Two
- d. Three
- e. Four
- f. More than four
- g. Does not apply to me

11. In your family, for whom is a PCS most stressful? (Choose only one.)

- a. Your military spouse
- b. Your child(ren)
- c. Yourself
- d. Parents/relatives

12. In your family, how stressful is a PCS move for each of the following members? (Circle one response per member) If you do not have anyone in a particular category, answer n/a.

1. Very stressful
2. Moderately stressful
3. Slightly stressful
4. Not stressful
5. NA

a. Yourself	1	2	3	4	5
b. Your military spouse	1	2	3	4	5
c. Pre-school child(ren)	1	2	3	4	5
d. Elementary school child(ren)	1	2	3	4	5
e. Middle/intermediate school child(ren)	1	2	3	4	5
f. High school students: Sophomores	1	2	3	4	5
Juniors	1	2	3	4	5
Seniors	1	2	3	4	5
g. College students	1	2	3	4	5
h. Elderly parents and relatives living with you	1	2	3	4	5

13. Frequent PCS moves have discouraged me from starting to work on an advance degree.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. Does not apply to me

14. Frequent PCS moves have discouraged me from continuing to work on an advance degree.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. Does not apply to me

15. Frequent PCS moves have interfered with my ability to complete an advance degree (Bachelors, Masters or other).

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. Does not apply to me

16. Frequent PCS moves have interfered with my ability to pursue a full-time career.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. Does not apply to me

17. Frequent PCS moves have prevented me from advancing upward in my career.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. Does not apply to me

18. Employers have been reluctant to hire me because they know I am a military spouse.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. Does not apply to me

19. Where were you stationed before Carlisle?

\_\_\_\_\_  
(location)

20. How stressful were the following for you when associated with the PCS move before the one to the Army War College?

1. Very stressful
2. Moderately
3. Slightly
4. Not stressful
5. NA

a. Leaving your friends	1	2	3	4	5
b. Disruption to your Education	1	2	3	4	5
c. Disruption to your job/career	1	2	3	4	5
d. Searching for new employment	1	2	3	4	5
e. Financial loss	1	2	3	4	5
f. Dealing with child(ren)'s emotional concerns	1	2	3	4	5
g. Getting child(ren) settled in a new school	1	2	3	4	5
h. Dealing with spouse's job concerns	1	2	3	4	5
i. Shouldering the main responsibility for the move	1	2	3	4	5
j. Selling, renting or finding a home	1	2	3	4	5
k. Leaving pets behind	1	2	3	4	5
l. Physical move/packing, unpacking)	1	2	3	4	5
m. Leaving parents or other family members	1	2	3	4	5
n. Making new friends	1	2	3	4	5

21. How many hours did you or your spouse take off from work to get your child(ren) settled after your last PCS move?

- A. None
- B. One to three
- C. Four to six
- D. More than six
- E. Does not apply to me

22. As a result of your last PCS move did you or your spouse take time from work because your child(ren) had problems adjusting to the move?

- A. Yes
- B. No
- C. Does not apply

23. Child(ren)'s behavioral problems in the family increase shortly before a PCS move.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. Does not apply

24. Child(ren)'s behavioral problems in the family increase shortly after a PCS move.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. Does not apply

25. Overall, PCS moves have been positive experiences for child(ren).

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. Does not apply

26. PCS moves have been the cause of stress between me and my child(ren).

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. Does not apply

27. How stressful do you think the following are for your child(ren) when associated with a PCS move?

1. Very stressful
2. Moderately
3. Slightly
4. Not stressful
5. Does not apply

- |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. Leaving friends                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. Adjusting to a new school                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c. Fitting into a new peer group            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d. Concern about extracurricular activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e. Interruption in their school curriculum  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

28. How I respond as a parent to frequent moves has a great impact on how well my family adjusts.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. Does not apply

29. An overseas PCS move is more stressful than moving in the States.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree

30. PCS moves have been the cause of additional stress between me and my spouse.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree



31. Which of the following feelings do you experience just prior to a PCS move? (Circle all that apply.)

- A. Isolated
- B. Lonely
- C. Apprehensive
- D. Displaced
- E. Confident
- F. Excited
- G. Secure

32. Which of the following feelings do you experience just after a PCS move? (Circle all that apply.)

- A. Isolated
- B. Lonely
- C. Apprehensive
- D. Displaced
- E. Confident
- F. Excited
- G. Secure

33. Just before or after a PCS which of the following have you observed in your family or yourself? (Circle all that apply.)

- A. Increase in colds, headaches or other general aches and pains.
- B. Remaining home from work/school for no concrete reason.
- C. More trips to the medical clinic for general medical complaints.
- D. None of the above.

34. After a PCS move I get very little help from my spouse in getting settled.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree

35. Competition for my spouse's time is an added stressor for me at PCS time.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree

36. Due to the frequent moves I would like my spouse to retire.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree

37. The stress of frequent PCS moves is lessened if installations have good support programs.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree

38. The following Installation Programs would help alleviate the stress of moving for me and/or my family.

- 1. Strongly agree
- 2. Agree
- 3. Disagree
- 4. Strongly disagree
- 5. NA

a. Financial classes on preparing for PCS	1	2	3	4	5
b. Spouse career planning	1	2	3	4	5
c. Spouse employment referrals	1	2	3	4	5
d. Spouse educational assistance	1	2	3	4	5
e. Relocation Assistance (New Installation)	1	2	3	4	5
f. Relocation Counselling (Departing Installation)	1	2	3	4	5
g. Installation Orientation	1	2	3	4	5
h. Local community orientation	1	2	3	4	5
i. Youth employment programs	1	2	3	4	5
j. Sponsorship Assistance	1	2	3	4	5
k. Youth sponsorship program	1	2	3	4	5
l. Directory of Installation Services and Programs	1	2	3	4	5
m. Youth Recreation Programs	1	2	3	4	5
n. Services for families living off post	1	2	3	4	5

39. A formal family stress management program would be helpful in coping with the stress of frequent PCS moves.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree

40. The frequency of PCS moves is a negative factor of military life.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree

41. Stressful confrontations between me and my spouse increase during PCS time.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree
- E. Does not apply

42. To what extent do you feel stress because you cannot make long-range career/job plans in the same way your spouse does?

- A. Great extent
- B. Moderate extent
- C. Slight extent
- D. Not at all
- E. Does not apply to me

43. When family needs conflict with Army needs, the family should come first.

- A. Strongly agree
- B. Agree
- C. Disagree
- D. Strongly disagree

44. What works for you in alleviating stress for your and your family?

APPENDIX B

## APPENDIX B

PCS most stressful for non-military spouse?

	Yes
Active Duty:	35
Spouse:	45

Spouses' attitude impacts on family.

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	73%
Spouse:	NA

Frequent moves a negative part of military life.

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	NA
Spouse:	67%

Would like military spouse to retire?

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	NA
Spouse:	74%

PCS a contributing factor in divorce?

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	48%
Spouse:	NA

Competition for military members' time a stressor?

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	NA
Spouse:	66%

Current job interferes with helping spouse?

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	78%
Spouse:	NA

Received little help from husband getting settled?

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	NA
Spouse:	77%

New job interfered with helping spouse?

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	70%
Spouse:	NA

Leaving friends very stressful?

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	6%
Spouse:	31%

No stress involved in leaving friends.

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	33%
Spouse:	16%

Making new friends very stressful?

	Yes
Active Duty:	
Spouse:	9%

Making new friends not stressful.

	Yes
Active Duty:	
Spouse:	38%

PCS a positive experience for children.

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	
Spouse:	85%

Children's emotional concerns stressful.

	Yes
Active Duty:	14%
Spouse:	32%

How stressful adjusting to new school?

	Very stressful
Active Duty:	50%
Spouse:	42%

Interruption to curriculum stressful?

	Very stressful
Active Duty:	29%
Spouse:	30%

Cause of stress with children.

	Yes
Active Duty:	60%
Spouse:	50%

Behavior problems increase before PCS.

	No	Yes
Active Duty:	50%	
Spouse:		50%

Behavior problems increase after PCS.

	Yes
Active Duty:	50%
Spouse:	40%

Time lost from work for adjustment problems.

	Yes
Active Duty:	11%
Spouse:	8%

Disruptions to career stressful.

	Very/moderately
Active Duty:	
Spouse:	70%

Disruptions to spouses' career stressful for self.

	Yes
Active Duty:	48%
Spouse:	

Moves interfere with career.

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	
Spouse:	75%

Employers reluctant to hire.

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	
Spouse:	52%

Searching for employment stressful.

	Yes	Very stressful
Active Duty:		
Spouse:	92%	44%

Cannot make career plans like husband.

Stressful

Active Duty:  
Spouse: 63%

Discouraged from working on advance degree.

Strongly Agree/Agree

Active Duty:  
Spouse: 67%

Precluded from completing degree.

Strongly Agree/Agree

Active Duty:  
Spouse: 70%

Interruptions to education stressful.

Very/moderately

Active Duty:  
Spouse: 62%

Interruption to spouse's education stressful for self.

Moderately

Active Duty: 62%  
Spouse:

Interruption to spouse's education not stressful.

Strongly Agree/Agree

Active Duty: 19%  
Spouse: 17%

Financial loss stressful.

Yes Very

Active Duty: 74%  
Spouse: 40%

Stress less if good Installation Programs.

Strongly Agree/Agree

Active Duty: 23%  
Spouse: 82%

Installation Assistance relieves stress.

Strongly Agree/Agree

Active Duty: 76%  
Spouse: 84%



Services beneficial.

	Yes
Active Duty:	47%
Spouse:	69%

Community orientations reduce stress.

	Yes
Active Duty:	
Spouse:	90%

Directory helpful.

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	80%
Spouse:	98%

Sponsorship program helpful.

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	80%
Spouse:	90%

Youth Sponsorship needed.

	Yes
Active Duty:	80%
Spouse:	90%

Career Planning Program needed.

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	
Spouse:	70%

Service for Off-Post families needed.

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	80%
Spouse:	93%

Formal Stress Management Programs needed.

	Strongly Agree/Agree
Active Duty:	
Spouse:	68%

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